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### *Citation for published version (APA):*

Ferlie, E. (2017). The New Public Management and Public Management Studies. In R. Aldag (Ed.), *Oxford Research Encyclopaedia of Business and Management* Oxford University Press, USA.

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*Author's Pre Publication Copy*

*This is a draft of a chapter that has now been accepted for publication by Oxford Research Encyclopaedia for Business and Management edited by R. Aldag and due for publication in 2017.*

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*'The New Public Management and Public Management Studies: A Review'*

*Ewan Ferlie*

*Abstract*

The rise of the New Public Management (NPM) is a major and sustained development in the management of public services apparent in a number of major countries. This entry describes some of NPM's key features, its rationale and key ideas and some claimed advantages and disadvantages. While much of the academic writing on the NPM has come from political science, this entry examines aspects of the NPM from an academic perspective in public management. Various additive contributions from a public management writing are outlined. While the NPM is now a mature field, a few suggestions for future research work are outlined.

*Introduction*

The decade of the 1980s witnessed major changes in the management of public services in various countries, including the extreme cases of the United Kingdom (UK) (Hood, 1991) and New Zealand (Boston et al, 1996) but also the United States of America (USA) (Osborne and Gaebler, 1992). These reforms embody the New Public Management (NPM) movement and involve a bundle of radical changes, including: privatisation and contracting out, marketization of services still inside the public sector, stronger performance management and

managerialisation. A typical NPM governance mode is a markets/management mix, combining more competition *between* public services agencies with stronger line management *within* them. In central government, Ministries downsize and export operational functions into newly autonomised 'executive agencies' (Pollitt et al, 2004), then performance managed from above through contracts with their ministerial 'owner'.

NPM reforms had various objectives, political as well as technical. They tried to shift public organizations away from the old rule bound Weberian form, to scale down the large public sectors which had grown up since the 1940s (along with associated high taxation levels), to reduce the power of over mighty producers (both trade unions and public services professionals) and create more 'business like' public services organizations. Government was supposed to become smaller, more entrepreneurial (Osborne and Gaebler, 1992) and to produce more public value (Moore, 1995) from limited resources. The reformed public agencies should seek to achieve high performance levels: 'performance' is an important NPM signifier rhetorically, as is the word 'entrepreneurial'. The old concern with the quality of the civil service's policy making competence was eclipsed by a more managerial emphasis on operational 'delivery' (another key NPM word). These NPM reforms challenged traditional public agencies. There is a debate about whether the old Weberian forms will in the end prove resilient (Meier and Hill, 2005) as they remain technically efficient or whether more 'entrepreneurial' public agencies are now diffusing rapidly (Osborne and Gaebler, 1992).

Given their political objectives, NPM reforms reflect wider shifts in the macro political economy in the 1980s. The New Right administrations of the 1980s, led by influential political leaders, such as Mrs Thatcher in the UK (elected in 1979) and Ronald Reagan in the

USA (1980), put 'shrinking government' – and reduced taxation – firmly on the political agenda. NPM reforms express this important shift within the more concrete domain of the organization of the State.

There is strong international variation and not all countries have gone down the NPM route (e.g. France and Germany remain largely NPM averse) (Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2011).

Nevertheless, some high impact NPM jurisdictions are apparent (e.g. UK; New Zealand; Sweden and Alberta, Canada). International donor agencies have also diffused NPM reforms to developing countries by imposing conditions to their aid packages, as they see NPM reforms as likely to promote transparency and good governance. So NPM reforming is a topic of widespread international interest.

This chapter will, firstly, offer a fuller definition of NPM reforms and then provides some examples. These examples are mainly drawn from the UK as the country with which the author is most familiar; although material from other high impact NPM states is also reviewed. The chapter moves on to discuss some intellectual ideas behind the NPM. It will consider some strengths and weaknesses of the NPM explored in an extensive academic literature.

Much NPM literature comes from political science, often exploring processes at the macro level of the nation state. But the discipline of public management has also made a contribution to the literature, notably at the meso level of the agency. As this chapter appears in a *management* research encyclopaedia, the chapter will finally review some key papers in

various strands of the public management literature - both mainstream and more critical – and explore what the public management academic community has analysed NPM reforms.

### *What Is the New Public Management?*

We start by defining the NPM more fully. Early academic writing sought to elucidate the emergent phenomenon already becoming evident in the public policy world. In the UK, the first major NPM orientated public management reforms appeared in the early 1980s: for example, the Griffiths Report (1983) introduced general management in the UK National Health Service (NHS), replacing the old system of consensus management and facilitative administration which critics argued protected traditional professional dominance (Freidson, 1970).

Political scientists engaged in helpful sense making: Hood 1991 provides an influential definition of seven core features of NPM reforms, namely: (i) ‘hands on’ professional management; (ii) explicit standards and measures of performance; (iii) greater stress on output based controls (as results now matter more than process); (iv) a disaggregation of units in the public sector; (v) more competition within the public sector itself; (vi) more private sector style management practice (including ‘flexible’ Human Resource Management (HRM)) and (vii) the pursuit of efficiency and ‘doing more with less’. Behind these doctrines lay rising political and societal values which emphasised efficiency and productivity, more so than traditional notions of democratic accountability and due process.

### *The ‘3 Ms’ Heuristic and Some UK Examples*

A '3 M' model elaborated here represents an alternative heuristic which outlines key features of the NPM vividly. The first M stands for *markets*, including not only straightforward privatisation of the nationalised industries but also the construction of new 'quasi markets' inside core services remaining inside the public sector.

A good example of a quasi market are changes in the UK NHS introduced in 1990 (Ferlie et al, 1996). A traditional line management hierarchy down from the Department of Health to individual hospitals gave way to a split between new organizational forms of purchasers and providers who now related to each other by contract rather than hierarchy. The idea was that purchasers would apply pressure on providers to improve the quality of services and reduce waiting times. They could in the last resort threaten to switch contracts away from underperforming providers.

On the provider side, previously directly managed NHS hospitals converted into so called 'NHS Trusts', with enhanced operational autonomy and better developed internal management capacity. There was a prospect in principle of market entry from independent health care providers who could win contracts from the purchasers. In practice, however, there was little market entry or exit in the first quasi market period (1990/1997), reflecting Department of Health level fears about system instability (Le Grand et al, 1998): the 'managed market' ended up being more managed than market. More recent legislation (2012) has stimulated greater market entry from alternative health care providers in such areas as community health services.

The second M stands for '*Management*' which was an occupational group typically empowered by NPM reforms against strong public sector trade unions and public services professionals: 'management must manage' was a key NPM slogan. The new public managers should within NPM doctrine focus actively on managing major change rather than mere

bureaucratic routine, pushing through policies desired by the political centre against local resistance (e.g. progressing long standing hospital closures, Pettigrew et al, 1992). In the higher education sector, Vice Chancellors were encouraged to act more as Chief Executives (Jarrett, 1985): whether an individual Vice Chancellor chooses to self describe as the 'Chief Executive' is a revealing linguistic choice. The pay of Vice Chancellors rose considerably; yet they face also higher performance pressures, job insecurity and turnover.

In addition, management capacity in public agencies would be developed through corporate governance reforms to enhance the role of the Board. Within the higher education sector, these reforms provoked major change at the corporate governance level in newer Universities where the academic profession was more weakly represented, Knight (2002), and managerial principles already firmly established. Old large and representative (and critics would argue ineffective) Boards (known as Councils in the higher education sector) gave way to smaller boards, with non executives appointed from outside and chosen for relevant business expertise (e.g. in finance, real estate or accounting) (Lambert, 2003). NPM doctrine also suggested these new boards might counter balance what might otherwise have become over dominant Vice Chancellors. Although (or even because) they came from outside the academic profession, these new Council members could act as 'principals', set and monitor performance objectives and keep their 'agents', that is, Vice Chancellors, in check. Buckland (2004) argues these private sector based models of corporate governance (Lambert, 2003) were inappropriately imported into University settings which should instead retain a wider social mission, rightly relating to many different stakeholders.

NPM reforms were significant in central government too. UK central Ministries retreated into a smaller strategic core: supposedly 'steering not rowing'. They exported many operational functions to newly created Executive Agencies (the so called 'Next Steps' Ibbs Report, 1988; Chapman, 1988; Pollitt et al, 2004), under framework agreements specifying their objectives. For example, the Driver and Vehicle Licencing Agency in Swansea maintains national registers of all UK drivers (45 million) and vehicles (38 million). It employed about 6,000 staff as of 2014 and is operating as an Executive Agency of the Department of Transport. The idea was that these 'monotonic' agencies would be good at doing one routine thing many times (Pollitt et al, 2004) and ramp up productivity levels.

Elston (2012) tracked the rapid diffusion of 'Next Steps' agencies over a decade up to 1997/8, by which time the UK agency population peaked at 138 (with 60 per cent of the home civil service staff). By 2009/10, the number had later fallen to 84 (but still with 62 per cent of such staff). The five largest agencies employed some 207,000 staff. So were Executive Agencies just a passing fad and was the cyclical 'disaggregation/reaggregation' thesis correct (Talbot and Johnson, 2007)?

Executive agencies proved difficult to sustain in politically sensitive fields where ministers wanted to reassert direct hierarchical control: both the Borders Agency and Passports Agency have been recently reabsorbed into the Home Office. Elston (2012) finds a mixed pattern in those agency closures evident in UK central government: 33 have been reabsorbed by their sponsors but a larger group (48) have taken the form of agency-agency mergers. A smaller number of 'super agencies' have emerged with responsibility for whole service delivery fields and reduced internal fragmentation. Elston (2012) concludes that many agencies 'live on', perhaps in an altered state, as part of an inheritance from the NPM era.

The third M in the 3 Ms model refers to 'Measurement'. NPM reforms sought to promote high public agency performance. In what was now a low trust culture, however, agency performance had to be measured so it could then be actively challenged and managed, if need be from outside. Tacit and professionally dominated forms of self regulation gave way to externally produced and explicit forms of performance measurement systems. Rising groups of regulators, inspectors and auditors (Power, 1997) developed performance management systems to identify and put pressure on the tail of poor providers. Extensive Key Performance Indicator (KPI) data on core agency targets (e.g. on examination results in schools; waiting times in hospitals) were routinely collected and passed up to the surveying national central regulator for evaluation, classification and publication, facilitated by the rapidly growing technological power of IT systems (Zuboff, 1988). UK examples of performance measurement and management orientated regulators included the Audit Commission in local government (later abolished), Ofsted in education and various regulators in the health sector.



### *NPM's Underpinning Intellectual Ideas*

Having described key features of the NPM movement and given some UK examples, we move on to discuss its underpinning ideas. The NPM should be construed as an intellectual and ideological movement as well as a political one, notably so in the New Zealand reform process (Halligan, 2011; Boston, 2011; Boston et al, 1996), which was heavily influenced by its national Treasury which drew on clear guiding ideas from public choice theory and agency theory.

NPM doctrines rest on a sophisticated intellectual base coming from organizational economics which reacts against the old Weberian sociological theory of the public bureaucracy (Weber, 1946). Weber saw the bureaucratic mode as expressing an attachment to rational legality and as the most technically efficient mode of organizing the modern state. Such bureaucrats are further supposed to serve the public interest and display a duty of service to the government, rather than pursue their private interests. In return, they are compensated with a salaried life long career (and pension) and protected social position (e.g. the German upper civil service or *beamter* who have a special legal status). They help provide the background capacity needed for a private sector to flourish within the rule of law (e.g. law of contract; private property rights) and a constitutional state (Du Gay, 2000). Weber was however critical of bureaucracy's 'rule bound' nature, trapping bureaucratic office holders in the 'iron cage' of formal – but not substantive - rationality.

Niskanen's 1971 classic work of public choice theory challenged more optimistic public service and public interest orientated models of public bureaucracies, suggesting that it is rational for careerist public bureaucrats to maximise their budgets, and hence their jurisdictions and power bases. One implication is that ministers, as political principals, should find novel policy instruments to increase levels of 'real' control over their civil servants, only nominally their agents.

Niskanen (1971) (as Boston, 2011, p24, points out) was also concerned about the risk of politicians favouring short term electoral and partisan objectives, essentially forming a pro public spending coalition with sectarian pressure groups (and it might be added expansionist

public agencies). The prospect was raised in public choice theory of ‘government failure’ with ever growing public sectors, high taxation levels and in the end poor economic performance. Policy responses to combat this threat include the design of new constitutional arrangements designed to limit public expenditure and achieve increased transparency and external scrutiny of political decisions around public spending. For example, the recently created Office for Budgetary Responsibility (OBR) in the UK defines its mission as follows: ‘It is the duty of the Office to examine and report on the sustainability of the public finances’ (<http://budgetresponsibility.org.uk>, accessed 22 February 2016). It reviews and comments on the public expenditure plans produced by elected politicians as an expert and independent voice.

Agency theory represents an important second intellectual influence (Boston, 2011, p25) on the NPM. Agency theory (see the overview by Eisenhardt, 1989) argues that the relationship between a principal (shareholders in a private firm; an elected minister in a ministry) and agents (salaried managers in the private firm; civil servants in the ministry) can be structured through tight contracts, of either an explicit or a psychological form: (Boston, 2011, p 26) ‘accordingly, the question of how best to construct, monitor and enforce contracts (or agreed relationships) between principals and agents is both extremely common and an issue of enduring significance’. Principals and agents may have different assumptions, with agents seen as typically more risk averse as they have fewer alternatives. The low trust assumptions of NPM suggest that where activity is not readily observable by the political principal; bureaucratic agents may ‘shirk’.

Agency theory has strong application in two areas of NPM reforming. The first area is in redesigning Human Resource Management (HRM) systems. This perspective supports a move – especially for senior public management posts - away from nationally agreed pay scales to more individualised contracts to ensure ‘pay for performance.’ Senior public managers could and should be incentivised to hit the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) set. Pay levels rise (indeed there is currently intense public concern in the UK about the ‘pay explosion’ in senior public management posts) but in return senior public managers have less certainty about continuing tenure. They might be employed on medium term renewable contracts. Turnover rates rise, as senior managers in public agencies deemed to be failing are

cleared out in turnaround regimes (Harvey et al, 2010). Senior management turnover rates may rise to the extent that they become dysfunctional, as teams dissolve and organizational memory erodes (see Hood and Dixon, 2015).

A second implication of agency theory lies in the governance domain, specifically the strengthening of the oversight role of the board in monitoring the performance of senior public managers. A compensation sub committee of the board of a public agency comprised solely of non executives now often considers pay levels, replicating behaviours previously associated with private sector PLCs. Within higher education, for example, a compensation sub committee of Council often assesses the performance of the Vice Chancellor against agreed objectives and agrees the annual compensation package. More information on these senior managers' organizational performance flows upwards to the board's subcommittee to support these judgements, facilitated by formal performance measurement systems and publicly available league tables. Critics still argue that such assessments have been too 'soft', fuelling a top pay spiral in the public sector which replicates that in the private sector.

#### *Vignettes of Non UK Countries with High Impact NPM Reforms*

Two brief vignettes of non UK countries also with high impact NPM reforms are now presented to illustrate their international reach.

*New Zealand* shows a radical period of NPM reforming in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Halligan (2011, p87) characterises the New Zealand reform package as based on two main principles. The first was the separation within central government of distinct policy and delivery roles and, secondly, the identification of specific functions with specialised organizations. Government roles divided into the purchaser of outputs from public agencies and the owner of agencies that produced the outputs, with the latter having a strong interest in securing return on investment. There was extensive corporatization and the creation of more

'business like' state owned enterprises. There was also major contracting out of service provision by the new purchasers. Halligan (2011, p97) finally notes the redefinition of ministers' relationship with their senior civil servants who were now renamed Chief Executives and took on contract based appointments based on performance agreements.

*Sweden:* here we draw on Foss Hansen (2013)'s chapter. Sweden is portrayed as a radical early mover towards NPM ideas, partly due to a fiscal crisis (1990) which led the downsizing of a historically large public sector. These ideas were largely accepted by the centre left Social Democrats as well as centre right parties. There has been extensive decentralisation of service delivery responsibility to local government. The Swedish case displays strong emphasis on principles of user responsiveness and free choice, for example, in local government where purchaser provider arrangements were brought in (Foss Hansen, 2013, p124). Service delivery in local government may now be performed by not for profits, cooperatives set up by users and also private firms, as well as traditional public sector providers.

### *Plotting and Explaining The International Spread of NPM Reforms*

A major theme has been exploring patterns of NPM spread and variation internationally. Hood (1995a) identified a cluster of Anglo Saxon countries as 'high impact' NPM states (e.g. UK, Australia, Canada and New Zealand) but also unexpected candidates such as Sweden.

The USA was here classified as 'medium impact', so lower down the NPM impact hierarchy than the UK. How could this difference be explained, when key American authors (e.g. Niskanen, 1971) wrote influential texts which developed NPM ideas? A first explanation

could lie in the separation of powers between different branches of USA government (executive, legislature and judiciary) and also the devolution of many competences from federal to state level which restrict the ability of the President to engage in centralised top down reforming. A second explanation could lie in the smaller scale of the American public sector so that the political ‘pay off’ from – and therefore top level political interest in – public management reform activity was correspondingly lower.

Low impact countries identified by Hood 1995a included such important cases as: Spain, Japan and Germany. So there were ‘leaders and laggards’ in NPM reform internationally and as yet no radical process of global convergence. Nor did high NPM impact always correlate with right wing political control as Sweden was under social democratic control during much of the critical period; while low NPM impact Japan consistently had right wing governments.

So this NPM literature relates to the wider convergence (vs) divergence debate. The core question is: will all countries eventually converge on a global NPM reform wave (Hood, 1995b) or will national variation remain strong, reflecting conditions of path dependence? Pollitt and Bouckaert 2011’s comparativist analysis argue that different tracks of public management reforming remain strongly evident internationally. For instance, Germany is seen as being on a neo Weberian track and remains largely NPM resistant.

Yet some pro NPM diffusion forces which may promote global convergence need to be considered seriously. Pierre and Rothstein (2011) argue that influential international bodies, such as the World Bank, International Monetary Fund and OECD, help export NPM reforms to the developing world as supposed instruments of ‘good governance’ to combat corruption.

At least a declared intent to adopt NPM reforms may be a condition for such agencies agreeing structural adjustment packages.

An analytic focus on international flows of management texts and knowledge (Ferlie et al, 2015) suggests that the expanding management consulting sector may represent another important diffuser. In addition, well selling public management texts circulate internationally and are imported into public services organizations. Osborne and Gaebler (1992) is perhaps the best known public management based text. Successive private sector orientated management texts (from Peters and Waterman, 1982, onwards) have also been influential within public services organizations. Often these texts and models are produced by elite American management consultancies (e.g. McKinsey's) or Business Schools (e.g. faculty at Harvard Business School) and later diffuse internationally from the USA and from their original base in the private sector to public sectors in other countries. These credible forces for convergence should be considered, alongside the argument for enduring local conditions and path dependency.

#### *A Review of Literature on The NPM's Possible Effects*

The lively debate about the possible advantages and disadvantages of NPM reforms will now be reviewed.

#### *Possible Advantages of NPM Reforms*

Firstly, NPM reforms seek to produce better value for money in the provision of public services, accurately reflecting a steer from a changed political climate which includes increased electoral tax aversion and suspicion of 'big government'. Clearly the search for

greater operational efficiency is apparent in many NPM reforms (but for a recent empirically informed and pessimistic analysis of the UK case, see Hood and Dixon 2013, 2015's important overview). At a mundane level, public agencies were set annual efficiency savings targets to meet within tighter budget rounds. The contracting out of services could in principle reduce the high social and add on costs in the core public sector labour market, for example, public sector pension costs (although Hood and Dixon 2015 suggest badly handled outsourcing may have increased costs). The greater employment of contract based rather than permanent labour is indicative of a more flexible public sector labour market which might drive down wage levels.

Secondly, NPM reforms seek to produce more pressure for higher public agency performance. In particular, they address the 'tail' of poor public services providers that had previously held a monopoly over their jurisdictions and had not faced contestability. There are a range of sanctions available within NPM reforms, ranging from 'naming and shaming' of failing agencies in visible league tables, then fines from regulators, up through the replacement of the whole top management team in 'turnaround' exercises and in extreme cases the loss of jurisdiction to an alternative provider and agency closure.

Thirdly, NPM reforms foster choice and greater voice for the users of public services who are now construed as customers (more than as citizens). These reforms may reflect wider societal values which have become less deferential and more consumerist. For example, UK undergraduate students now pay higher tuition fees than previously. In return, Universities have been compelled by the sectoral regulator (HEFCE) to implement mechanisms which increase student voice (such as student experience surveys) and to publish key performance

information on their websites (e.g. number of contact hours; external examiners' reports) to inform student choice.

Fourthly, and as already remarked, NPM reforms are often seen as a policy instrument which can promote good governance and increased transparency in developing countries where there may be inherited problems with extensive government and high corruption which make simple donations of aid ineffective. Such NPM reforms may be instantiated within a newly founded and specially constructed agency outside the rest of government that can be staffed by a carefully selected 'modernising elite'. The recently created Higher Education Commission in Pakistan, for instance, has been supported by the World Bank and has an important role in attempting to upgrade the country's large Higher Education sector. A counter argument is that argue the elaborate contracting processes associated with NPM reforms reopen the door to corruption.

#### *Some Disadvantages of NPM Reforms*

A first major criticism is that NPM's guiding values are too efficiency rather than democracy led. Some political scientists (Skelcher, 1998) pointed in the UK case to the so called 'democratic deficit' with the significant transfer of functions from elected local government (which may be under the control of opposition political parties wishing to expand public service and spending) to appointed agencies or 'quangos' set up by the central state. UK NPM reforms have typically shrunk the scope of elected local government and expanded that of appointed agencies.



A good example is the moving of the old UK Polytechnics (with their more vocational degrees) in the higher education sector from local government control in 1992 and their recreation as the so called 'New Universities' and as independent corporations. Knight (2002) criticises their governance model which essentially adopted that of the Anglo Saxon private firm: a strong Vice Chancellor expected to operate as a CEO, balanced by a small and senior group of non executives usually drawn from the business sector and deliberately recruited from outside the academic sector. Staff and student representation at board level was weak, as was the academic board supposed to provide advice on academic matters.

A second claimed disadvantage is the 'hollowing out' of the creative policy making capacity traditionally provided by central civil servants and an excessive swing to operational management or 'delivery'. It is argued that 'policy disasters' (or large scale, avoidable, policy mistakes) increasingly emerge (Dunleavy, 1995). The English Department of Health has been described by Greer and Jarman, (2007) as morphing into the 'Department for Delivery' in the 2000s, as NHS managers displaced career senior civil servants as the former appeared as more responsive to ministerial direction and willing to 'deliver' their agenda.

Thirdly, the NPM's construction of autonomised and specialist agencies can counterproductively strengthen inward facing 'silo' thinking and erode wider systemic capacity, a criticism perhaps acknowledged in the recent decline in the number of Executive Agencies (Elston, 2012). Not all government tasks are high volume or simple, or amenable to rapid productivity increases. The question arises of how to handle important 'wicked problems' which cross silo boundaries and require network or systems based responses and also co production from citizens (examples include climate change, an ageing society and

obesity/type 2 diabetes) (Ferlie et al, 2011, 2013). This inter agency fragmentation was a negative feature in the New Zealand case (Halligan, 2011) which later was unpicked.

Fourthly, the NPM is based on stronger *management*, directed against supposedly over mighty public sector producers. A recent concern is that the pendulum has swung too far towards managerialisation, with little professional ownership of top down reforms (Thomas and Davies, 2005). Later post NPM reforms shifted from promoting general management back to a broader and softer notion of 'leadership' (e.g. Berwick, 1994; Llewelyn, 2001), which could come from professional managerial hybrids (e.g. headmasters in schools) rather than general managers. Their leadership style is seen as more transformational than transactional and more likely to engage with sceptical rank and file staff (Angawi, 2012).

Fifthly and finally, NPM reforms may erode the 'organizational ambidexterity' (Raisch and Birkenshaw, 2008) that some strategic management research argues is a hallmark of a successful organization. This concept suggests that such an organization needs to achieve a balance between short term exploitation activity and longer term and more creative exploration activity.

NPM reforms typically reinforce the dominance of a short term, target and efficiency driven and operational management orientated agenda. Yet this perspective may have negative side effects and unintended consequences. Harvey et al's 2010 examination of poorly performing UK public agencies, for example, found that low 'absorptive capacity', or ability to sense, import and use readily available knowledge about poor performance levels, contributed to their escalating difficulties.

So how does longer term organizational learning, creativity and innovation occur in NPM orientated public agencies? Hartley and Rashman (2010, p156) draw a typology of what they call 'leadership for performance' (short termist, pre planned, micro level and mechanistic) and 'leadership for learning' (longer term, more discovery based, emergent and macro level) in public agencies. They argue that the performance agenda has been over dominant and has marginalised learning based approaches.

### *Putting Public Management Scholarship Back into The NPM*

The New Public *Management* presents a clear invitation for comment from the public management discipline. NPM writing has involved various social sciences, including public choice economics (Niskanen, 1971) where powerful underpinning ideas were generated. A major contribution comes from political science based authors, especially from the more public administration orientated end of that discipline. Political scientists have often been sceptical of the dysfunctional effects of NPM reforms (Dunleavy et al, 2006), stressing the erosion of policy making capacity (Dunleavy, 1995) or their anti democratic consequences (Skelcher, 1998). Their focus is often at the macro level of the nation state and may even involve comparative analysis between states (Hood, 1991; 1995; Lodge and Gill, 2011).

What can the discipline of public management add to this extensive political science informed literature? More so than the political science tradition, management research operates at the meso level of the public services organization (seen in informal as well as in formal structural terms) or even the micro level of the individual public manager, where roles and even identities may shift as individuals resist, adapt or embrace NPM reforms. We

should recall the proliferation of different schools within the broad discipline of management apparent over the last generation (Clegg et al, 1996), reflecting wider developments in other social sciences (e.g. gender perspectives; a 'green' perspective). So there are many different management based approaches which could potentially be used to study the NPM 'problem.'

As an initial generalisation, the European management research tradition shows greater emphasis on critical and interpretive approaches; by contrast, American management research tends to tilt towards more quantitative and performance orientated work. There are of course many exceptions to this assertion, given also that international networks of scholars working within either approach cross national boundaries. Some management academics are eclectic and use various theoretical framings, depending on the problem. Nevertheless, the point remains that there is now strong diversity in academic management writing with various mainstream but also more critical approaches.

This section will briefly review work from different schools in management research. It is suggested they all usefully bring in new contributions, but in distinctive ways. They are ordered in a rough spectrum from the more quantitative/functionalist towards the more interpretive/critical (although there are also important schools in the middle). By way of academic shorthand, the discussion moves from the academic 'right' of the study of performance, through the 'centre' of professionals in organizations and ends with the academic 'left' of critical management studies.

Firstly, and firmly located in the mainstream camp, Boyne et al 2006 argue that agency 'performance' has now become an - or even *the* - major question in public management

scholarship. Their research agenda fits well with the orthodox NPM prism with its emphasis on performance. This research tradition explores the correlates and modifiers of public agency performance in (for example) UK local government settings (Andrews et al, 2006, 2009), sometimes using the statistical analysis of survey based data across a population of public agencies (see also Walker and Boyne, 2006). Alternative questions of democracy or equity in this stream remain less explored.

Also on the more mainstream end of the research spectrum lie attempts to study of public agencies through generic strategic management writing, sometimes still in a sectorally adapted form (Moore, 1995; Ferlie and Ongaro, 2015; Rosenberg Hansen and Ferlie, 2016). For example, Andrews et al (2006) connect their exploration of public agency performance with an analysis of their strategic style, using Miles and Snow's (1978) typology.

Given NPM reforms often create autonomised service delivery organizations with discretionary managerial action (e.g. executive agencies, NHS FTs), strategic management approaches may have become of greater academic as well as practitioner interest at this meso level. The full title of Moore's (1995) well known text on public value is: 'Creating Public Value: Strategic Management in Government' (for a political science based criticism of its openness to private sector management techniques, see Rhodes and Wanna, 2007).

Bryson (2011)'s influential model of a strategic change cycle is designed (American) public and not for profit agencies, and brings together a conventional analysis of fit between the organization and its external environment characteristic of the early design and planning

school of strategy (Mintzberg et al, 2009; Ferlie and Ongaro, 2009) but now allied to a parallel concern with 'softer' issues of organizational visioning, learning and change.

The competitive forces developing in quasi market based or marketising sectors now containing public services organizations may make other private sector based models of competitive strategy (e.g. Porter, 1980) more appropriate. Porter and Teisberg (2006) apply standard Porterian concepts to analyse the failings of the large and strategically significant American health care sector, arguing that it needs a better value based style of competition rather than less competition. The Resource based View of the Firm (RBV) school of strategy has analysed the (sometimes problematic) acquisition, internalization and use of knowledge within public agencies, in particular RBV related concepts of 'dynamic capabilities' (Casebeer et al, 2010) and 'absorptive capacity' (Harvey et al, 2010).

There is a question of about whether generic strategic management models should still be customised to public services contexts. Vining 2011's exploration of Porterian models in current public services settings argues they still require adaptation to what remains a more political context, but also then helpfully draws out a ladder of politicality which ranges from the highly politically sensitive advisory units in Prime Ministerial/Presidential offices down to a growing number of autonomised executive agencies or public private hybrids where private sector models are seen as more applicable.

We now review what might be termed a 'centrist' school of management research from the discipline of organization studies. Public services organizations have historically been seen as highly professionalised, for example, in the health, education and legal sectors. Health care

can be seen as a sector of great interest in this field, given the historic success of the clinical professionalisation project. Thus some classic sociology of the professions literature has historically been particularly interested in health care settings: Freidson (1970)'s theory of professional dominance explored the high autonomy of American medicine in its most powerful period. Mintzberg (1983)'s organizational archetype of the 'professionalised bureaucracy' (e.g. in teaching hospitals) teased out the implications of such conditions for a distinctive form of strategy making (e.g. facilitative and non directive administration; disconnected, bottom up and incrementally expansionist bids from core professionals; a weak strategic core) (see Denis et al, 1991, for an empirically informed study of similar processes in an empirical study of strategic planning in Canadian hospitals).

Freidson (1985, 2001) later revised his original professional dominance thesis to concede there was some movement away from it but such change was seen as less radical than by more radical 'deprofessionalisation' authors (McKinlay and Arches, 1985; McKinlay and Stoeckle, 1988). A preferred alternative scenario was one of 'professional restratification' whereby professional elites (especially two forms of managerial and knowledge based elites) separated themselves out from the professional rank and file (see also Waring 2014 for a more developed typology).

The implication was that an elite subgroup of health care professionals might take on management tasks and could even marginalise the newly empowered general managers in a process of 'professional recolonization' (Waring, 2007). A considerable empirically informed literature has by now examined these clinical managerial hybrids, their knowledge bases, how they construct their roles and any shifts in underlying identities. To what extent are these

hybrids able to balance what might be seen as distinct professional and managerial roles and logics? Or are they seen as ‘going over to the dark side’, losing legitimacy with their clinical colleagues. For example, Llewellyn (2001) was relatively optimistic about the ability of doctors to take on managerial roles as long as they developed more financial expertise. It was easier for them to acquire managerial expertise than it was for general managers to acquire clinical expertise. Croft et al 2015, by contrast, was more pessimistic about the ability of (in this study) nurse managers to maintain an effective balance between the two different roles.

Some authors recently argued for the revival of professionalism as a governing logic against what was now seen as an over dominant and failed managerialism (Freidson, 2001). Martin et al (2015) explored the fate of attempts to restimulate professional logics in service improvement projects in the English NHS to secure genuine professional engagement with change. These projects ran into the problem that the professional logic was not the only or even the dominant logic in the current health care field: a managerial logic retained considerable power over the allocation of resources. While much of this literature has been health care based, it could be applied to other public services settings with influential professions (e.g. education; science based public agencies; the legal system).

On the more radical side of the spectrum of management writing, critical management studies (CMS) has emerged as an important academic current, especially within the European and UK traditions (Alvesson and Wilmott, 2003). It can be seen as broadly anti capitalist in orientation and open to various theoretical currents from wider social science. Influences include but go beyond the Marxist tradition of labour process theory to include a gender perspective and also a developing Foucauldian body of scholarship on the way new ICTs



morph into electronic surveillance regimes (Doolin, 2000) within public agencies. CMS scholars are interested in the distribution and use of power in organizations and are broadly critical of the top down nature of NPM reforms which they see as alien and as imposed on rank and file staff.

Currie et al 2010 outline a manifesto for CMS approaches within public management which draws on several theoretical perspectives, including: Foucauldian analyses; psycho analytic studies of organizations; and theories of gender and sexuality. In addition, some labour process scholars have examined developments in public sector organizations from a work intensification perspective (see Smith et al 2002 on limits to changing control modes in a NHS call centre staffed by nurses).

NPM reforms have often been strongly critiqued by CMS scholars for their imposition of a markets/management governance mode in what is construed as a historically cooperative and team based public sector. Such top down reforms, in this view (Currie et al, 2010), may well and rightly face opposition from the rank and file workforce or even from those in the middle of the hierarchy now being expected to manage in new and oppressive ways. For example, some critical management scholars have explored the micro politics of 'resistance' at ground level by individual public managers to NPM reforms (Thomas and Davies, 2005), using an intensive analysis of a small number of interviews and taking a Foucauldian perspective on identity creation and transformation. The critical perspective further includes a gender prism (Davies and Thomas, 2002): should the NPM be seen as a male and alien style of managing being inappropriately imported into the public sector (where many rank and file workers are female such as teachers and nurses and where government has traditionally been a family

friendly employer) from 'macho' private firms? Alongside empirically informed critique, more normative CMS argumentation imagines alternative and more emancipatory organizational settings in a post NPM public sector (Currie et al, 2010).

It is thus suggested that public management research and writing on the NPM has four strong and distinctive themes which complements and adds to the broader literature from other social science disciplines, notably including political science: (i) performance levels in public agencies; (ii) their strategic management; (iii) the management of public services professionals; (iv) a critical perspective on resistance to NPM reforms.

### *Conclusion and Forward Look*

So what is there, if anything, new for management scholars to say about the longstanding NPM phenomenon? Firstly, academics' continuing search for the next 'big' reform wave in public management (Moore, 1995; Newman, 2001; Rhodes, 2007; Dunleavy et al, 2006) begs the question of whether the NPM has really been 'deinstitutionalised' (Oliver, 1992) or whether the NPM paradigm remains embedded, even if dysfunctionally so (Lodge and Gill, 2011; Trenholm and Ferlie, 2013). This NPM embeddedness problem could be tackled from an institutionalist viewpoint (Oliver, 1992) by examining theoretically which processes might be expected to occur within any such deinstitutionalisation. Any erosion of NPM's political and societal legitimacy might be an important indicator, as it would indicate change in the core domain of social and political values. Such a theoretical look would helpfully inform later empirically based assessment.

Secondly, and again within a broadly institutionalist framing, the diffusion of NPM reforms, texts and knowledges can be used as an important concrete example in the wider exploration of the international diffusion of management knowledge (Sahlin-Anderson and Engwall, 2002a, 2002b). International fashion setters in the NPM field globally may include actors such as the World Bank, management consultants (Saint Martin, 2004) (Osborne and Gaebler, 1992) along with Business School texts and faculty (Porter and Teisberg, 2006) (Ferlie et al, 2015). Some private sector management texts appear to have had strong impact on public managers' styles of working, associated with the increased receptivity associated with NPM reforms. For example, Hughes (1996)'s study of a newly appointed general management team in a Welsh health care site found a surprising infusion of transformational and entrepreneurial ideas about management style, as a 'block buster' and culturally orientated American management text (Peters and Waterman, 1982) crossed into UK public services settings.

Thirdly, the role of the core professions within public services organizations (e.g. clinicians; lawyers; academics) and their relationship with NPM reforms remains of great interest. Will the old logic of professionalism eventually be remobilized against empowered managerialism (Friedson, 2001; Martin et al, 2015), especially if levels of social and political trust in the 'hard' ethos of NPM erodes?

The evolution of the professions and individual professionals within the setting of public agencies is of great interest. Do the professions re-stratify internally into managerial and knowledge orientated elites and a rank and file (Freidson, 1985) or do groups of professionals collectively recolonise originally managerial domains of work (Waring, 2007)? How do

individual 'hybrids' (e.g. doctors who take on part time management roles) balance the different logics of professionalism and managerialism and reconstruct roles, careers and even perhaps their underlying identity (McGivern et al, 2015)?

In conclusion, this chapter, firstly, has reviewed the key characteristics of the major public management phenomenon that is the NPM. NPM has triggered much academic writing from various disciplines, with a major influence from political science. In the second half of the chapter, specifically, the substantial contribution of some very different streams of public management scholarship to the analysis of the NPM was discussed and elucidated. While the NPM is by now indeed in its mature phase, three suggestions for contained areas of future research work were made.

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